

# Release Manager - Role and Responsibilities

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## Overview

The Release Manager is to provide oversight, coordination and implementation of targeted software releases using standard DMDC release management guidelines. DMDC leadership will identify and assign targeted Enterprise software releases to the release manager. Enterprise level software releases may include DMDC schema releases (3.16), framework-shared components (Emma, Common Update Framework) and infrastructure (Oracle R2, R33, 11G). Responsibilities include but are not limited to: define software release deliverables, develop and monitor the implementation schedule, utilize project management best practices, facilitate cross-group communications, monitor work and report on the status, and coordinate the Go Live process.

The Release Manager requires the following skills:

- Project management expertise, project leadership, and a commitment to excellence
- Project negotiation, planning, coordination, and problem solving skills
- Process improvement leadership and best practices adoption
- Project coordination between team members and the management team
- Proactive communication to management and stakeholders on the status of the project and tasks
- Project escalation management when issues arise

## Key Responsibilities

Software change requests are the initial input to a software release cycle. As software changes are approved, they are mapped to specific software and milestone artifacts which are subsequently assigned to a release date. Software artifacts include items like web applications, database scripts, and control cores. Milestone artifacts are dates associated with deployment to a region (Test One, Production, etc.).

Infrastructure changes are reviewed to identify the impacted software, which is subsequently mapped to a release, or series of releases.

The Release Manager is responsible for monitoring the readiness of each release component based on release criteria (quality of the release, environment readiness, training and support, rollout plans, and risk management plans).

- **Requirements Definition** – For each assigned release, ensure timelines for development, deployment, and operational requirements are clearly defined, documented, and understood by the team. Attain team buy-in on the requirements definition from the affected groups.
  - In coordination with cross divisional groups, define software artifacts targeted for the assigned releases.
  - Identify key point of contact information for all software artifacts
  - Document release deliverables in SharePoint, MS Word, and MS Excel spreadsheets as required
  - Utilize CMS (Change Management Systems) and USD (Unicenter Service Desk) level release reports as needed to manage the assigned release
- **Process/Release Cycle Management** – Drive processes and adoption of best practices. Utilize processes and procedures to control and track implementation deliverables and deployment. Document and socialize best practices; and promote organizational compliance with defined processes and best practices.
  - Develop and maintain a cross-group project schedule, which includes high level tasks, scheduled resources, schedule dates, priorities, and dependencies. Track the progress of each task.
  - Conduct software release implementation status meetings and document them in meeting notes

- **Cross-Group Coordination** - Effectively coordinate with teams on all project activities and facilitate good team communications.
  - Communicate with the Systems Group to identify infrastructure readiness tasks and assess their impact to the software release
    - Communicate as needed to the affected groups associated to the software release
  - Communicate with Product/Project Managers to periodically review status of software artifacts associated with the release
    - **NOTE:** Product/Project Managers are responsible for ensuring their software is assigned to the correct release and moving through the release pipeline in accordance with the designated release timeline
      - Product/Project Managers are also responsible for obtaining QA and PM signoff of their respective software in accordance with the software release milestones and overall timeline
  - Communicate with Quality Assurance and Product/Project Managers for Enterprise level testing related impacts to the software release schedule
  - Work with Quality Assurance and Configuration Management to develop a strategy to implement notifications for region status within SharePoint
  - Participate in Configuration Control Board meetings with Product Managers to review the status of the software release deliverables. Document in CCB status reports.
  - Participate in short term planning meetings in support of the software release. Document in STP meeting notes.
  - Communicate with Configuration Management for software release status
  - Communicate with Production Support for required infrastructure tasks
  - Coordinate with the production support and Configuration management teams to schedule deployments
  - Ensure software release staging checklist reports, CMS level release reports, and MS Excel spreadsheets are utilized and up-to-date
  - Verify and confirm sign off approvals are in place for software artifacts supporting the release
  - Coordinate and direct Go Live implementation activities (MML, etc.)
    - Implement checklist management for Go Live
  - Schedule post release meetings (lessons learned)
  
- **Reporting Deliverables** – The release manager will utilize SharePoint as much as possible to manage reporting deliverables, with the exception of reports generated via existing applications. The release manager will interact with the DMDC change and configuration management applications in support of producing and/or managing assigned reporting deliverables. The following table lists the key reporting deliverables supporting a release.

Deliverable	Description	Required/Optional	Comments
Release Implementation Schedule	Timeline based schedule used to manage milestone dates supporting the release	Required - Major Release Optional - Other	
CMS Software Release Spreadsheet	DMDC Change Management System report which lists software artifacts assigned to a release	Required - All Releases	This report is generated from the DMDC Change Management System (CMS). Changes to the underlying data are managed within CMS
Short Term Planning Notes Input	Provide key release dates and information to the Short Term Planning Coordinator	Required – Major Release	Short Term Planning is used as a forum for planning key infrastructure milestones

<b>Deliverable</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Required/Optional</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Release Implementation Checklist	High level checklist of the steps required to support the release during Go Live	Required	
Release Lessons Learned Report	Post release lessons learned document used to identify process improvements discovered during the release	Optional	
Implementation Status Meeting Notes	Meeting notes to capture action items, and other comments resulting from the meetings	Required – Major Release	